

Church Polity in our Theological Seminary, viz: Revs. C. R. Hemphill, D. D., W. L. Lingle, D. D., C. R. Reed, D. D., Thomas W. Currie and A. R. Shaw, D. D.

Thornton Whaling, Chairman.

#### Sabbath and Family Religion.

Rev. Dr. Robert Hill presented the following report which was adopted:

Your Permanent Committee on the Sabbath and Family Religion would respectfully present the following report:

The active campaign which the Assembly of 1914 directed this committee to undertake has been kept up, and we are glad to say that, at last, definite results appear to be forthcoming. In this past year there have been more responses from the ministers and Presbyterian committees than in both the preceding years put together. More requests are coming in from ministers for help to aid in forcibly presenting the cause from their pulpits, and more letters are being received expressing the satisfaction of the writers in the fact that such definite efforts are being made to rehabilitate the family altar. Copies of reports of Presbyterian committees to their Presbyteries now being received in the office of the chairmen of the committee bear testimony to a largely increased interest. Some of these reports are of a totally different character from the usual formal and lifeless papers we have been in the habit of reading. They show a real understanding of the vital need, and manifest a zeal for reformation that is altogether praiseworthy and promising.

And yet certain sections of the Church are moving very slowly. In 1915 we reported to the Assembly that fourteen Presbyteries did not have on their list of committees a committee on the Sabbath and Family Religion. The Assembly in 1916 recommended, "That all Presbyteries appoint a Permanent Committee on the Sabbath and Family Religion, and that the Presbyterian stated clerks send the names of the chairmen of said committees to the chairman of the Assembly's Permanent Committee." So far only one of the fourteen Presbyteries report having appointed such committees; and, so far, less than half a dozen Presbyterian stated clerks have forwarded the names of the chairmen of their Permanent Committees to the Assembly's Committee.

Of course, all this makes for delay, inefficiency and expense in carrying on the work. The Presbyteries which have no committee on this cause cannot have the matter presented to them in the same pointed and business-like way as those which have. Some say the Committee on the Narrative handles this subject but all who regularly attend Presbytery know that it cannot get the attention due it in this way.

We are glad to report to the Assembly that up to the first of April last 1,060 members had been enrolled in the Family Altar League; this shows progress; true, it shows we have a long way to go; but it also shows we are moving in the right direction. The reports show that in thirteen Presbyteries there are no members enrolled in the League. The largest Presbytery in the Church, Lexington, with 12,975 members (minutes of 1916) has 34 enrolled members. Fayetteville, the next largest, with 12,537 members (1916) has 2. These figures are cited to show how rich the gleaming yet is.

There are several things needed before the best results may be expected. First, of course, the work must be kept up, and pushed with greater vigor. Secondly, a pamphlet literature must be built up with satisfactory helps for pulpit preparation. Thirdly, every Presbytery must have a related committee. Fourthly, the chairman of this committee must be known to the Assembly's Committee. Fifthly, we must now begin to interest the Synods, so as to get a close and efficient organization throughout the Church. Sixthly, some more systematic way of financing the work must be found. The volume of correspondence is becoming larger and larger, and the present method of referring to Richmond every inquirer after material, more unwieldy. It frequently happens that a minister suddenly decides to preach on this subject next Sunday or the Sunday after, he writes to this office for certain supplies, his letter must be referred to Richmond,

Va., and by the time he gets what he wants, the need has passed.

The Secretary of Publication has been most generous and cordial in his co-operation, but Tyler, Texas, and Richmond, Va., are too far apart to get the best results. This is becoming more and more apparent as the work grows.

Your Committee would respectfully suggest that you consider either the moving of the headquarters of the Committee nearer the base of supplies; or moving necessary supplies nearer the Committee.

The last Assembly instructed this Committee to do two things: First, "To prepare a suitable program for this Assembly in the interest of family religion," and, secondly, "To prepare and send to all churches a pastoral letter upon the subject of family religion."

Both of these orders have been obeyed. After much careful study, and having respect of the amount of business always before the Assembly, the Committee considered that two addresses would accomplish what the Assembly had in view. We have, therefore, to report that at such time as the Assembly may set. The Rev. John S. Foster, D. D., of Birmingham, Ala., will address the Assembly on "The Home as a Training Place for Citizenship," or "What the Home Owes to the State," and the Rev. Walter L. Lingle, D. D., on "What a Father Owes to His Children."

The pastoral letter was mailed out on February 10th, and along with it a copy of "Religion in the Home," by Rev. Walter W. Moore, D. D.

Robert Hill,  
Chairman.

#### Reformation Day.

The Committee appointed to frame and submit to the churches a program for the proper celebration of the four hundredth anniversary of the beginning of the Protestant Reformation would respectfully report that they have proposed such a program, including a Catechism on Luther and the Reformation for use in the Sunday-schools, that most of the program is now in the hands of the Committee of Publication, and that the entire program will be issued in ample time for convenient use by our pastors, churches and Sunday-schools.

Respectfully submitted,  
W. W. MOORE,  
R. R. WEBB,  
Committee.

This report was adopted.

#### Telegram From President Wilson.

The moderator read the following telegram from President Wilson:

The White House, Washington, D. C.,  
May 22, 1917.

Rev. Dr. John M. Wells, Moderator General Assembly, Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, Ala.:

Accept my cordial thanks for your telegram. I am heartened and cheered by such a message, and am grateful to the members of the Assembly for their prayers.

Woodrow Wilson.

#### Telegram From Northern Assembly.

Dallas, Tex., May 21.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in session at Dallas, Tex., sends affectionate Christian greetings. Read John 17:20 and 21. J. Wilbur Chapman, moderator; Wm. H. Roberts, stated clerk.

#### Reformed Church in the United States.

The following telegram was received:

Dayton, Ohio, May 22, 1917.

Moderator General Assembly of the Southern Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, Ala.:

The General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States now in triennial session in Dayton sends cordial greetings to the General Assembly of the Southern Presbyterian Church. We join hands and hearts with you in our common task.

Read John 17:20, 21.

Charleston E. Miller, President.

#### Sabbath and Family Religion.

The Standing Committee on the Sabbath and Family Religion presented the following report, in connection with which Rev. Dr. Robert Hill, the chairman of the permanent committee on this subject, made an address, in which he spoke of the encouraging results accomplished by his committee

in awakening interest in the Family Altar League, and urged those present to do all they could to establish the league in their churches. This report was adopted.

The Committee on Sabbath and Family Religion submits the following report:

It is hardly necessary to say that the Sabbath and Christianity stand or fall together. If the Sabbath shall continue to be more and more given to business and amusement, spiritual values will be largely forgotten. We are face to face, also, with the tendency of war to destroy reverence for the Lord's day. Religious worship, service and training in the home are wrought into the life of our Church. We stand or fall as a Church with our Christian homes. We note with rejoicing the progress your permanent committee has made in its campaign of education and inspiration. The work of this committee has been largely pioneer work, and has had to overcome many obstacles. Letters have been answered tardily or not at all. Presbyteries have been slow to appoint permanent committees, and stated clerks have not been prompt in furnishing information. We congratulate the permanent committee on their good work, specially the program presented to the Assembly.

Your committee would recommend (1) that the permanent committee shall be: Dr. Robert Hill, Tyler, Tex.; Dr. C. T. Caldwell, Waco, Tex.; Dr. A. F. Carr, Fort Worth, Tex.; Elder G. G. Brazelton, Tyler, Tex.

(2) That the thirteen Presbyteries that have not yet appointed a permanent Committee on Sabbath and Family Religion be urged to do so.

(3) That the stated clerks of Presbyteries be instructed to send to Dr. Hill the names of the chairmen of permanent committees.

(4) That this Assembly appropriate the sum of \$100.00 to meet necessary expenses of this committee.

(5) That the Presbyterian committees be requested to urge the importance of the Family Altar League.

J. C. Tims, Chairman.

#### THE QUESTION OF UNION.

No subject awakened more interest during the whole meeting of the Assembly than the proposition to appoint a committee to confer with a like committee from the Northern Church in regard to the union of the two bodies. This was brought before the Assembly by overtures from some of the Presbyteries of the Church in response to a request from New York Presbytery, and also by the following telegram received from the Northern Assembly in session at Dallas, Texas:

#### The Northern Church Wants Union.

The following telegram was received from the Northern Assembly now in session in Dallas, Texas:

Dallas, Texas, May 21, 1917.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S., Birmingham, Ala.:

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. has adopted the following resolutions:

(1) Resolved that 195 Presbyteries having taken action on an overture looking to organic union between the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. and the Presbyterian Church in the U. S., therefore

(2) Resolved, That this Assembly, which has for many years stood ready, is now ready to enter into negotiations with a view to organic union with the Presbyterian Church, U. S.

(3) Resolved, That this matter be committed to the General Assembly's Committee on Church Co-operation and Union with instructions to enter into negotiations with the Presbyterian Church, U. S., through a committee appointed by its General Assembly, if it should deem it advisable so to do.

(4) Resolved, That these resolutions be telegraphed to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. in session at Birmingham, Ala.

J. Wilbur Chapman,  
Moderator.  
Wm. H. Roberts,  
Stated Clerk.

#### Personal Telegrams.

These telegrams were received and read by the moderator:

Dallas, Texas, May 23, 1917.

Rev. John M. Wells, Moderator Presbyterian General Assembly, Birmingham, Ala.:

As a son of a Confederate captain, who was a Southern Presbyterian elder forty years, as an elder in the First church, Dallas, and superintendent of Sunday-school, as general secretary of the Texas Sunday-school Association of all Denominations, I personally see probably more than any other Texas person the absolute need and wisdom of getting together for conserving Presbyterian forces, finances, service, powers, in the entire field for reaching, teaching, preaching, winning and training more people for our Christ. Believing that ninety-five per cent of Texas Presbyterians long for early union of our churches, I am praying that God may lead our great Assembly to that end.

William Nehemiah Wiggins.

Fort Worth, Texas, May 22, 1917.

Moderator General Assembly Presbyterian Church, U. S., Birmingham, Ala.:

The First Presbyterian church, U. S., of Fort Worth, Texas, is praying that the Assembly will take favorable action on the question of organic union.

Elders J. P. Millican,  
R. F. Peden,  
F. B. Porter,  
J. K. Millican,  
O. E. Paxton.

The overtures and telegram were referred to a special committee, which brought in a majority and a minority report as follows:

#### Majority Report.

The special Committee on Relations with the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America beg to submit the following report:

There were placed in our hands papers as follows: Overtures from the Presbyteries of Meridian, Arkansas, Louisville, Upper Missouri, Savannah, Eastern Texas and Knoxville, West Lexington, asking for the appointment of a committee to confer with a similar committee from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.; from the Presbyteries of Concord, Mecklenburg, Swannee and Durant, asking for the appointment of a committee to ascertain if a doctrinal basis could be formulated upon which union could be effected; from the Presbyteries of Transylvania and Roanoke opposing the opening of the subject, and an overture from the Presbytery of West Hanover counselling the Assembly to be careful in the approach to the matter; an overture from the Presbytery of Washburn, asking relief from the violation of comity agreement on the part of the Presbytery of Arkansas, Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., at Springdale, Ark.; an overture from Louisville Presbytery, asking for action looking to closer relation and co-operation of all churches holding the Presbyterian system; from St. John's Presbytery asking that the Assembly take steps looking towards exchange of the Synod of Oklahoma, U. S., for the churches within the bounds of the State of Florida, under the jurisdiction of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., and a telegram from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., sitting in Dallas, Texas.

In response to the overture from the Presbytery of St. Johns, while appreciating the interest of our brethren in Florida, we recommend that it be answered in the negative, for the reason that no suggestion of such an exchange has come from the Synod of Oklahoma, which it seems to this committee should join in such a request before it could be properly entertained by this Assembly. We take this occasion to commend the zeal of our brethren of that Synod who are laboring on the advance line of our Church and pledge to them our warmest sympathy and support.

In response to overture No. 4 from the Presbytery of Washburn we recommend that the Assembly send to the General Assembly, U. S. A., now in session at Dallas, Texas, the following communication: "Brethren in Christ: We observe from the minutes of your Assembly, 1916, page 116, Vol. XVI, that the form of the report agreed upon by our joint committee on comity appointed by the Assemblies of 1915, which was presented unchanged to our Assembly of 1916 was upon presentation to your Assembly of 1916 so altered by the addition of an 'explanation' as to con-

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